

Accommodation Arrangements between Host Families and Students

Students always remember the kindness of the people and the cleanliness and comfort of the place where they stayed. Our *Accommodation Officer* looks after students and finds accommodation with English families, or if requested in a guesthouse or a hotel, near the school. They are always made to feel welcome and happy wherever they are staying.

English Host Families

We recommend homestay because it is the best way to practise English and experience British lifestyles. **St George's Clubclass** chooses their families with great care, making sure the houses are **clean and warm** and that the family is welcoming and helpful. It is vital that our families spend time with our students and communicate with them. Students will be placed with a family who match their needs.

We recognise at **St. George's Clubclass** that good English family accommodation is as important as a good course. You will spend quite a lot of time in your English home and therefore you must feel comfortable, warm and welcome.

Every host family has a copy of this information, and you will receive your copy on the first day at school. This leaflet informs both you and families what **St. George's Clubclass** expects of the accommodation arrangements. It is available in English only. If you need help to understand it, you should ask your family or someone at the school (but first try with a dictionary!).

Nationalities of students in the home

A **St. George's Clubclass** student should be the only student of his/her nationality or language group staying with the family; but during the summer months it cannot be guaranteed unless specifically requested in advance. However, we will always try to accommodate two friends or relatives who request to be together, once again this should be requested in advance: i.e. on the booking registration form.

The Student's Bedroom

Families with more than one bedroom must accommodate students only in those bedrooms that have been agreed with **St. George's Clubclass**.

The bedroom should include...

- a firm comfortable bed of at least standard size
- a wardrobe and chest of drawers
- a mirror
- a chair, table and lamp suitable for study or facilities within the home for quiet study.

The room should be cleaned, dusted and vacuumed at least once a week and fresh bed linen and clean bath and hand towels provided every 2nd week. You are expected to keep your room tidy and to make your bed every day.

Heating

English homes are not generally heated to as high a temperature as homes in other countries. You may therefore take a little time to get accustomed to the lower temperature. You however should have sufficient heating in your bedroom so as not to feel cold in the early morning and to be warm enough while doing your homework and at bedtime. (Heating is much more expensive in England than in most countries). Extra blankets should be available.

Baths & Showers

Baths are more usual in England than showers. You should be allowed to take a bath (or shower) every day, if you wish to do so. As the bathroom is shared with other members of the household, you should check with the family which times are the most convenient to use the bathroom and you should clean the bath after use. Families should also ensure that the bathroom/shower/toilet is clean daily.

Laundry

Host families are expected to do students' laundry. Students should tell the family if they have any laundry.

Door Keys

If a student is over the age of 16 then a door key should be given to the student on their arrival and taken back on the day of their departure. If a student is under the age of 16, then it at the host family's discretion whether or not they issue a door key. However if they do not issue a door key, they should ensure that someone is at home to let them in at arranged and reasonable times.

Meals

Accommodation arrangements include breakfast, packed lunch and evening meal Monday to Friday and full board at the weekend, student(s) and family eating together.

Students and host families should discuss likes and dislikes so as not to waste food. A substantial breakfast should be offered. As a minimum, it should include cereal, toast (or rolls), butter and jam, tea or coffee.

Food and cooking are different in every country – you must not expect to eat the same types of meal you have in your own home but you can expect sufficient variety and quantity to satisfy your appetites.

Students will receive a packed lunch, which should contain as **a minimum** the following items:

- Two rounds of sandwiches with a reasonable filling. (Rolls or French bagette) – meat or cheese with salad.
- One piece of fruit
- One drink
- One biscuit/yoghurt

Please ensure the packed lunch varies from day to day.

The evening meal should also be substantial – and most days include meat, fish or poultry and a dessert – because it is the student's main meal of the day. Weekend lunches vary from family to family, sometimes a light meal, other times a big meal.

Unlike many continental countries, in England it is not usual to drink alcohol with meals at home. You should not use the kitchen, or help yourself to food, unless your hostess has given permission.

If you do not intend to be home for a meal you must inform your family in the morning or preferably the day before. If you are out for the day at the weekend, you are entitled to a packed lunch, and should be offered this.

If you know you will be late for an evening meal you may request a cold snack to be left for you.

Telephone

Telephone calls are expensive in this country. At **St. George's Clubclass** we provide phone cards to ring abroad. They can be used with normal home phones and there is no charge for the family's phone bill. Please keep all phone calls under 15 minutes so that you do not monopolise the Family phone.

Damage in the house

It is of course rare that students cause damage in the home. **St. George's Clubclass** can accept no responsibility for such damage, accidental or otherwise. Families are advised to check whether their household insurance covers damage caused by guests. Students and host families should report any alleged damages to the host family organiser.

Many of our students have some sort of insurance before coming to this country so it would be worth checking with them directly.

Should there any damage occur, which the host family feels that it is the student's responsibility, the host family should do the following:

- Discuss the matter immediately with the student.
- Report the matter to the school who will **act as an intermediately only and will not take any responsibility for damages.**
- The school will contact the student and/or the leader who will be responsible for any compensation that may be claimed.

Students and their health

If you have a medical or dental problem, you should ask your family to make an appointment with their doctor or dentist. Some doctors and dentists are too busy to accept new patients. If so, your family will look in the Yellow Pages for other local doctors or dentists for you. Doctors may charge a fee to see you; dentists always charge. Emergency dentistry is available under the NHS daily 5.30p.m.- 10.00p.m..Please telephone (or ask your family to telephone) the school office if you are ill and unable to come to school.

Family life

Students are being accepted into English homes in order to experience a little of the English way of life, to have the opportunity to practise the English language and to have a comfortable and friendly place to eat and sleep.

Students are guests in the family but also members of the family. You should not expect special treatment and both family and students should be considerate towards each other. It is important too for students and families to realise that there may be differences in customs and habits, though we encourage you to accept English ways of doing things. However, as in all relationships there should be give and take from both sides.

You will be welcome to spend time in the company of the family but must also appreciate that there will be occasions when the family want to be on their own or go out alone.

Social Programme

Students and host families should discuss the details of their social programme daily and arrange dinner, lunch, etc according to the timetable of the social programme.

If you have a problem

We hope that the family and you can solve any problem directly. Sometimes this is not possible, in which case the student or the family can speak with the Accommodation Officer (Linda Gibbens). A student who wishes to change family must inform **St. George's Clubclass** and the family, one week before the change or alternatively, pay a cancellation fee (one week's accommodation charge). If the family wishes to change a student, they must have reasonable justification and we will make alternative arrangements as soon as possible.

Student Arrivals

If possible all students will be met on arrival by their Host Family and on departure taken to the local train/bus station.